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end of the world, then these laws must be recognized as world-laws, and the moral order of the world as the order of all things; then there must be also a moral author of the world, or an *original ground* of all things, who can be no other being than the world-creating will or God. Thus Kant's teleological view of the world culminates in the moral theology which furnishes the basis for the only valid demonstration of the existence of God, whose reality Kant never doubted, whose theoretical demonstrability he denied and disproved in his doctrine of knowledge, whose existence he affirmed with complete certitude in his doctrine of freedom and faith. Without will as the original ground of the world, there is in the latter neither freedom, nor final end, nor development.

HEGEL'S PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN BY F. LOUIS SOLDAN.

B. Preliminary Questions.

Before proceeding to the discourse on our subject proper, it seems indispensable to settle some preliminary questions, or rather to institute an inquiry into them, with the understanding that it shall depend upon the results of it whether any such discourse, [that is to say] any rational cognition of religion, be possible. An inquiry into these questions and an answer to them seem indispensably necessary, since they have pre-eminently occupied the philosophical and popular interest of contemporaneous thought, and because they concern the fundamental principles of the present public sentiment regarding religious doctrines and their cognition. If we should omit such inquiry, it would at least be necessary to show that this omission is not accidental, and that it has its justification in the fact that the essential part of such inquiry is not a preliminary question, but belongs to our science itself, within which all these questions shall find their solution.

Hence we shall here consider those obstacles only with which the learning and the sentiment of our times has opposed the right of trying to comprehend religion through reason.

1. Not religion in general forms the subject of our inquiry, but positive religion, which is acknowledged to have been given by God and to rest upon higher authority than man's, and of which it is asserted that it must, consequently, lie beyond the pale of human reason and appear exalted above its reach. In this respect, the first obstacle placed in our way is, that we are called upon to prove that reason possesses the right and the capability of judging the truths and doctrines of a religion of which it is asserted that it withdraws itself from the reach of human reason. It is an impossibility, however, for conceptive cognition to avoid all relationship with positive religion. Some people have, indeed, said, and continue to say, that positive religion is a matter for itself, whose doctrines are simply to be received, respected, and esteemed; that reason and conceptive cognition stand on an entirely different level and must not come into contact with religion; that reason should not concern itself with the doctrines of faith. This was in former times the customary way in which the freedom of philosophical inquiry was guarded. It was asserted that the latter is a matter by itself, which must never be allowed to encroach upon theology, and that, if need be, its results must be subordinated to the doctrines of positive religion. We are unable to accept such a position for our inquiry. It is false that faith and free philosophical thought can rest side by side in an attitude of passivity and indifference. It is not true that faith in the content of positive religion can survive when reason has arrived at the conviction of the contrary. It is therefore consistent and correct that the church has not allowed the view to gain ground which holds that reason is opposed to faith and yet must submit to it. The human mind is not so divided in its innermost core as to allow two things to exist within it which contradict each other. Whenever a discord between thinking and religion arises, it must be removed by cognition or it will surely lead to despair and drive out reconciliation. Despair is but the consequence of one-sided reconciliation; for, when one phase of the question is rejected while the other is embraced, no true peace can be gained. [This one-sided rejection may assume one of two forms.] One is that the mind, divided in itself, discards the claims of thinking and tries to return to *naïve* religious feeling. But in this the spirit does violence to itself, for consciousness will demand satisfaction and re-

fuse to be violently set aside. The healthy mind is incapable of renouncing independent thinking. Religious feeling is transformed into longing; it becomes hypocrisy and cannot free itself from the phase of dissatisfaction. The other [form of] one-sidedness is that of indifference toward religion; it either takes the latter for granted as a settled question, or it opposes it. Such is the consistency of shallow minds!

This, then, is the first preliminary question; we are to show by what right reason is entitled to occupy itself with these doctrines of religion.

2. The standpoint which we have just reviewed asserts that reason cannot truly know the nature of God; the possibility of cognizing other truths is admitted, but it is denied that the highest truth is knowable. There are those who even deny that reason can cognize any truth whatever. It is asserted that whenever cognition undertakes to concern itself with spirit in and for itself, with life, with the infinite, it brings forth nought but error, and that on this account reason should forever abandon the claim of being able to arrive at any positive conception of the infinite; thinking will ever annul the infinite and lower it to the finite. Although the inference from this objection in regard to reason would be the renunciation of reason, such inference is nevertheless said to flow from rational cognition itself. Accordingly it would be necessary to inquire into human reason itself in order to see whether it possesses the ability of knowing God, and, consequently, contains the possibility of a philosophy of religion.

3. Herewith is connected the [erroneous] claim that our knowledge of God is not a matter of comprehension and reason, but that the consciousness of His existence and presence wells up from our emotional nature, and that consequently man's relation to God lies entirely within the province of feeling and must not be translated into thinking. If [the idea of] God were excluded from the grasp of intelligent cognition, and from necessary, substantial subjectivity, nothing indeed would be left except to assign [the idea of] God to the realm of accidental subjectivity or to feeling. Where such views are held, one can only wonder that there is any objectivity at all ascribed to God. In this respect the materialistic views (or by whatever name they are called—empirical, historical, naturalistic, etc.) are much more consistent, because, if they consider spirit

and thinking as functions of matter, and reduce them to sensations, they take God also for a product of the feelings and deny objective existence to Him. The result, of course, is atheism. Materialism makes God the product of weakness or fear, of pleasure or selfish hope, of avarice and tyranny. Whatever has for its sole basis my feelings, exists for myself alone; it belongs to my notions and is not self-existent; it is not independent in and for itself. These considerations prove the necessity of showing that [the idea of] God has for its basis not simply our feelings, and that He is not simply *my* God. It becomes evidently the task of philosophy of religion to supply proof for the existence of God.

It might appear as if the other sciences had the advantage of philosophy, since [the reality of] their subject-matter or content is acknowledged beforehand and they are relieved of the necessity of proving its existence. In arithmetic the existence of number is taken for granted, in geometry that of space, in medicine that of the human body; they are not required to prove the existence of space, body, sickness, and the like. Philosophy seems to be at a disadvantage, for before it begins its inquiries it is to be compelled to secure for its subjects the claim of existence. While it is perhaps indulged in asserting the existence of this world, exception is taken at once when it proceeds to presuppose the reality of the immaterial, of thought, of spirit free from matter, or, indeed, of God. The subject-matter of philosophy differs in kind from that of the sciences above mentioned, and shall certainly not be allowed, like theirs, to remain a mere supposition. Philosophy, and more especially philosophy of religion, shall prove its own subject. Before it exists it is required to prove that it does exist. It is required to prove its existence prior to its existence.

These, then, are the preliminary questions to which, it seems, an immediate answer is required by which the possibility of a philosophy of religion is to be established. If such views are valid, the philosophy of religion becomes impossible, because, in order to explain its possibility, those obstacles would have to be removed. This is the first aspect. But we waive these questions for the present. Our main reason for doing this may be mentioned in brief, and the explanation may perhaps remove the difficulty.

The first demand which is made is, that there should be, in the first place, an examination into reason, into the faculty of cogni-

tion, before that faculty should be allowed to begin the work of cognition. This seems to imply an idea as if cognition used some instrument to take hold of truth. The demand that this instrument be examined in the first place is, closely considered, a crude one. The critique of the faculty of cognition is the standpoint of Kantian philosophy, and that of the age and its theology in general. It was supposed that a great discovery had been made by this idea, but in this people made a mistake, as will often happen in this world. It is observed frequently that people are never more foolish than when they have what they consider a remarkably bright idea; they will derive satisfaction from the fact that they have found an excellent turn for their folly and ignorance. They are always inexhaustible in devices when there is an opportunity of blinding their conscience in regard to their indolence, and of escaping from the consideration of such questions.

Reason, then, is to be examined; but how? It is to be examined rationally, it is to be cognized. This, however, is possible through rational thinking alone, and in no other way. The demand thus cancels itself. If we are not to be allowed to begin with philosophy without having rationally cognized reason itself, we can never begin. For we cannot cognize except by thinking through reason; but this we are enjoined from doing; we are told to cognize reason before doing anything else. It is the same proposition which the gentleman from Gascogne made who did not wish to go into the water before he had learned to swim. It is impossible to examine into the activity of reason without using reason.

Here, in the philosophy of religion, God, or (since God is essentially rational) Reason, is the subject. God is rationality, which, as spirit, subsists in and for itself. In discussing reason philosophically, we do examine into cognition, but not in such a manner as if we thought that this question could be treated as a preliminary one, and could precede the subject. No, the cognition of reason forms our subject itself. Spirit exists for spirit alone. This proposition implies the existence of the finite spirit; within the philosophy of religion the relation of the finite spirit, or of finite reason to divine reason, unfolds itself. The discussion of this relation belongs to our philosophy, and will find therein its place when the first rise of this relation will be discussed. Herein lies the

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difference between a science and a collection of aphorisms about a science; the latter are accidental and contingent. If they are thoughts germane to the subject, they ought to have been embodied in the inquiry itself, and then they are no longer accidental bubbles of wit.

Spirit, in positing itself as an object, assumes essentially the form of phenomenality, or of something which reaches the finite spirit from above. This process implies the mode in which spirit arrives at a positive religion. The spirit assumes existence for itself in the form of image-representation, or, in other words, in the shape of alienation and phenomenality; and for this alien being, for this other, in and for whose conception spirit exists, the positive content of religion is brought about. There is also contained in religion the category of reason, and consequently religion is also cognition and active comprehension and thinking. The standpoint of cognition, then, is included within religion as well as that of feeling. Feeling is subjective; it is that which is my own individually, and for which I defer to no other authority. In the form of feeling, God exists in the utmost isolation of particular individuality, and consequently the standpoint of feeling, too, is a necessary phase in the development of the idea of religion, since spiritual relation or spirit exists in the feeling. The proposition also that God *is* belongs to this discourse on religion.

In short, religion is the last and highest sphere of human consciousness, whether the latter be sentiment, will, representation, knowledge, or cognition. Religion is the absolute result; it is the region which man enters as that of absolute truth.

Since this is the character of religion, it is plain that, in order to step into this sphere, consciousness must have risen above the finite in general, above finite existence, conditions, aims, interests, and above finite thoughts and every kind of finite relation. In order to be within religion, all these finite things must have been disposed of.

Although, even for common consciousness, religion is the elevation above the finite, this fundamental principle is disregarded by the opponents of philosophy, and, more particularly, by the opponents of the philosophy of religion, or God. For in their argument they make use of finite thought, of the relations of limitations, and of the categories of finitude.

We shall pass this over with a few words. One of these finite forms is, for instance, the immediateness of knowledge, the fact of consciousness. To this class of categories belong also the contrasts of the finite and the infinite, of subject and object. Such contrasts, however, as the finite or the infinite, subject or object, are abstract forms which are quite out of place in such an absolutely rich and concrete content as is found in religion. It is the spirit and the heart which are concerned in religion, and the categories and principles which they contain differ entirely from those of finitude and the like. But, notwithstanding this, determinations like the latter are brought forward as if they could possibly form the basis for the principal truths of religion. These [finite] determinations and categories are indeed necessary, since they are the passing phases of the essential relation which underlies religion; and this renders it all the more important that their nature should already have been examined and cognized; this logical demonstration must lie behind us when we proceed to treat of religion in a scientific manner. Such categories must have been disposed of and rejected previously. But, instead of this being the case, it is common to make them the basis for opposition to comprehension, to the idea or to rational cognition. This opposition uses those categories, without critical judgment, in the most *naïve* way, ignoring the existence even of Kant's "Critique of Pure Reason," which had at least the merit of assailing these forms, and of arriving in its way at the result that these categories could be used in the cognition of phenomena only. In religion, however, we are not concerned in mere external aspects or phenomena, but in the absolute content. The supporters of such an argument seem to take cognizance of the existence of Kant's philosophy only for the purpose of making a more unscrupulous use of those categories. It is improper, and even silly, to bring forward against philosophy categories like that of Immediateness, or the fact of consciousness, and to inform it that there is a difference between the finite and the infinite, between subject and object, as if any human being, any philosopher, could be ignorant of it, and would have to be told such a triviality. But there are, nevertheless, those who have the assurance to bring forward such wisdom with an air of triumph, as if they had made a new discovery.

Whatever may be the basis for such sapient and overwise talk,

we will say briefly that such categories as the finite and infinite, subject and object, are indeed different, but that they are at the same time inseparable also. Of this, natural philosophy gives an illustration in the south and north pole. It is said also that those categories are as different as heaven from earth. Quite right; they are absolutely distinct. But they are at the same time inseparable, as the illustration implies; there is no earth without a heaven, and *vice versa*.

It is an irksome task to argue with those who contend against the philosophy of religion and think of achieving an easy triumph; for, while they say that immediateness is different from mediation, they show great ignorance and total unfamiliarity with the forms, and categories which they use in their attacks and through which they judge of philosophy. They tell us in the most *naïve* way how these categories occur in the mind, without having reflected on these subjects and without having inquired into external nature and into the inner experience of their consciousness or mind. Reality is not present to them, but foreign and unknown. Their talk, which is pointed against philosophy, is the talk of the schools, which clings to void and empty categories; philosophy, however, does not belong to the world of the so-called school, but to the world of reality. In the wealth of the categories of the latter, philosophy does not find a yoke and a burden which it has to carry, but it feels that it allows scope and room for the freest movement. Those who assail and malign philosophy become incapable, by their finite mode of thinking, of grasping a philosophical proposition, and, even when they repeat its words, they misunderstand it, for, since they carry their finite categories into it, they cannot grasp its infinity.

Philosophy is untiring and spares no pains in investigating carefully the merits of its opponent. It believes that this is necessary, and simply satisfies the immanent impulse of its idea in attempting to know both itself and its opponent (*verum index sui et falsi*); and it might well expect equal fairness on the part of its opponent, and that he should forget his hostility in studying in turn the essence of that which he opposes. But such is not the outcome. The magnanimity of philosophy in recognizing its opponent, and in heaping coals of fire upon his head, is of no avail; the opponent does not submit to it, and declines mediation. And even when before our inquiry this opposition should dissolve itself

into a mist, a spectre, the sole purpose of our inquiry remains to satisfy the claims of comprehending thought, and not simply to show to our opponent that we have been right. It is impossible to influence him personally and to convince him, because he will ever insist upon remaining within his narrow categories. A thoughtful mind should have passed beyond all those forms of reflection, and should have learned their nature and the true relation which exists in them—namely, the infinite relation, wherein their finitude is cancelled. The insight will then be gained that both the immediate and the mediated knowledge are entirely one-sided. The truth is found in their union; in it there is immediate knowledge which is at the same time mediated, mediate knowledge which is at the same time simple, immediate relation to itself. By the cancellation of one-sidedness through such union it becomes a relation of infinity. This is a union in which the difference of those categories is cancelled, but at the same time ideally preserved in the higher category, and is made to serve as the impulse of all animation, as the propelling force, motor, and main-spring of the spiritual as well as of physical life.

Since we shall begin in the following discourse with religion, which is the highest and last subject, we must be allowed to presuppose here that those vain and empty relations are for us a standpoint of the past. Since we omit these preliminary discussions which have been demanded from us as the basis of the science, it follows that in our discourse on religion proper we should pay some attention to the modes and categories of thinking that are employed in it.

Having thus referred the discussion of these preliminary questions to the following discourse itself, we proceed now to a general survey and division of our subject.